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The Foundation

Beginning with Yellowstone, the idea of a national park was an American invention of historic consequences. The areas that now comprise the national park system, and those that will be added in years to come, are cumulative expressions of a single national heritage. The National Park Service must manage park resources and values in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.



Grizzly bears thrive in Yellowstone National Park, which was set aside in 1872 "for the benefit and enjoyment of all the people."

1.1 The National Park Idea

The world's first national park—Yellowstone—was created in 1872, at which time Congress set aside more than one million acres as “a public park or pleasuring ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people.” The legislation assigned control of the new park to the Secretary of the Interior, who would be responsible for issuing regulations to provide for the “preservation, from injury or spoliation, of all timber, mineral deposits, natural curiosities, or wonders, within the park, and their retention in their natural condition.” Other park management functions were to include the development of visitor accommodations, the construction of roads and bridle trails, the removal of trespassers, and protection “against the wanton destruction of the fish and game found within the park” (16 USC 21-22).

This idea of a national park was an American invention of historic consequences, marking the beginning of a world-wide movement that has subsequently spread to more than 100 countries and 1,200 national parks and conservation preserves. However, when Yellowstone National Park was created, no concept or plan existed upon which to build a system of such parks. The concept now described as the national park system, which embraces, nationwide, a wide variety of natural and cultural resources, evolved slowly over the years—often through the consolidation of federal land management responsibilities.

As interest grew in preserving the great scenic wonders of the West, efforts were also under way to protect the sites and structures associated with early Native American culture, particularly in the Southwest. The Antiquities Act of 1906 authorized the President “to declare by public proclamation [as national monuments] historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest” (16 USC 431).

In 1916, Congress created the National Park Service in the Department of the Interior to “promote and regulate the use of the federal areas known as national parks, monuments, and reservations” (16 USC 1). (The terms “National Park Service,” “Park Service,” “Service,” and “NPS” are used interchangeably in this document.)

1.2 The National Park System

The number and diversity of parks within the national park system grew as a result of a government reorganization in 1933, another following World War II, and yet another during the 1960s. Today there are more than 375 units in the national park system. These units are variously designated as national parks, monuments, preserves, lakeshores, seashores, wild and scenic rivers, trails, historic sites, military parks, battlefields, historical parks, recreation areas, memorials, and parkways. Regardless of the many names and official designations of the park lands that make up the national park system, all represent some nationally significant aspect of our natural or cultural heritage. As the physical remnants of our past, and great scenic and natural places that continue to evolve—repositories of outstanding recreation opportunities—classrooms of our heritage—and the legacy we leave to future generations—they warrant the highest standard of protection.

1.3 Criteria for Inclusion

Congress has declared in the NPS General Authorities Act of 1970 that areas comprising the national park system are cumulative expressions of a single national heritage. Potential additions to the national park system should therefore contribute in their own special way to a system that fully represents the broad spectrum of natural and cultural resources that characterize our nation. The National Park Service is responsible for conducting professional studies of potential additions to the national park system when specifically authorized by an Act of Congress, and for making recommendations to the Secretary of the Interior, the President, and Congress. Several laws outline criteria for units of the national park system, and for additions to the national wild and scenic rivers system and the national trails system. To receive a favorable recommendation from the Service, a proposed addition to the national park system must (1) possess nationally significant natural or cultural resources; (2) be a suitable addition to the system; (3) be a feasible addition to the system; and (4) require direct NPS management, instead of alternative protection by other public agencies or the private sector. These criteria are designed to ensure that the national park system includes only the most outstanding examples of the nation's natural and cultural resources. They also recognize that there are other management alternatives for preserving the nation's outstanding resources.

1.3.1 National Significance

NPS professionals, in consultation with subject matter experts, scholars, and scientists, will determine whether a resource is nationally significant. An area will be considered nationally significant if it

- is an outstanding example of a particular type of resource;
- possesses exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the natural or cultural themes of our nation's heritage;
- offers superlative opportunities for public enjoyment, or for scientific study; and
- retains a high degree of integrity as a true, accurate, and relatively unspoiled example of a resource.

National significance for cultural resources will be evaluated by applying the National Historic Landmarks process contained in 36 CFR Part 65.

1.3.2 Suitability

An area is considered suitable for addition to the national park system if it represents a natural or cultural resource type that is not already adequately represented in the national park system, or is not comparably represented and protected for public enjoyment by other federal agencies; tribal, state, or local governments; or the private sector.

Adequacy of representation is determined on a case-by-case basis by comparing the potential addition to other comparably managed areas representing the same resource type, while considering differences or similarities in the character, quality, quantity, or combination of resource values. The comparative analysis also addresses rarity of the resources; interpretive and educational potential; and similar resources already protected in the national park system or in other public or private own-

ership. The comparison results in a determination of whether the proposed new area would expand, enhance, or duplicate resource-protection or visitor-use opportunities found in other comparably managed areas.

1.3.3 Feasibility

To be feasible as a new unit of the national park system, an area must (1) be of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure sustainable resource protection and visitor enjoyment (taking into account current and potential impacts from sources beyond proposed park boundaries); and (2) be capable of efficient administration by the NPS at a reasonable cost.

In evaluating feasibility, the Service considers a variety of factors, such as: size; boundary configurations; current and potential uses of the study area and surrounding lands; land ownership patterns; public enjoyment potential; costs associated with acquisition, development, restoration, and operation; access; current and potential threats to the resources; existing degradation of resources; staffing requirements; local planning and zoning for the study area; the level of local and general public support; and the economic/socioeconomic impacts of designation as a unit of the national park system.

The feasibility evaluation also considers the ability of the National Park Service to undertake new management responsibilities in light of current and projected constraints on funding and personnel.

An overall evaluation of feasibility will be made after taking into account all of the above factors. However, evaluations may sometimes identify concerns or conditions, rather than simply reach a “yes” or “no” conclusion. For example, some new areas may be feasible additions to the national park system only if landowners are willing to sell; or the boundary encompasses specific areas necessary for visitor access; or state or local governments will provide appropriate assurances that adjacent land uses will remain compatible with the study area’s resources and values.

1.3.4 Direct NPS Management

There are many excellent examples of the successful management of important natural and cultural resources by other public agencies, private conservation organizations, and individuals. The National Park Service applauds these accomplishments, and actively encourages the expansion of conservation activities by state, local, and private entities, and by other federal agencies. Unless direct National Park Service management of a studied area is identified as the clearly superior alternative, the Service will recommend that one or more of these other entities assume a lead management role, and that the area not receive national park system status.

Studies will evaluate an appropriate range of management alternatives and will identify which alternative or combination of alternatives would, in the professional judgment of the Director, be most effective and efficient in protecting significant resources and providing opportunities for appropriate public enjoyment. Alternatives for NPS management will not be developed for study areas that fail to meet any one of the four criteria for inclusion listed in section 1.3.1.

In cases where a study area’s resources meet criteria for national significance but do not meet other criteria for inclusion in the national park system, the Service may instead recommend an

alternative status, such as “affiliated” area. To be eligible for “affiliated area” status, the area’s resources must: (1) meet the same section 1.3.1 standards for national significance that apply to units of the national park system; (2) require some special recognition or technical assistance beyond what is available through existing NPS programs; (3) be managed in accordance with the policies and standards that apply to units of the national park system; and (4) be assured of sustained resource protection, as documented in a formal agreement between the NPS and the non-federal management entity. Designation as a “heritage area” is another option that may be recommended. Heritage areas are distinctive landscapes that do not necessarily meet the same standards of national significance as national park areas. Either of these two alternatives would recognize an area’s importance to the nation without requiring or implying management by the National Park Service.

1.4 Park Management

1.4.1 The Laws Generally Governing Park Management

The most important statutory directive for the National Park Service is provided by interrelated provisions of the NPS Organic Act of 1916, and the NPS General Authorities Act of 1970, including amendments to the latter law enacted in 1978.

The key management-related provision of the Organic Act is:

[The National Park Service] shall promote and regulate the use of the Federal areas known as national parks, monuments, and reservations hereinafter specified... by such means and measures as conform to the fundamental purpose of the said parks, monuments, and reservations, which purpose is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations. (16 USC 1)

Congress supplemented and clarified these provisions through enactment of the General Authorities Act in 1970, and again through enactment of a 1978 amendment to that law (the “Redwood amendment,” contained in a bill expanding Redwood National Park, which added the last two sentences in the following provision). The key part of that act, as amended, is:

Congress declares that the national park system, which began with establishment of Yellowstone National Park in 1872, has since grown to include superlative natural, historic, and recreation areas in every major region of the United States, its territories and island possessions; that these areas, though distinct in character, are united through their inter-related purposes and resources into one national park system as cumulative expressions of a single national heritage; that, individually and collectively, these areas derive increased national dignity and recognition of their superlative environmental quality through their inclusion jointly with each other in one national park system preserved and managed for the benefit and inspiration of all the people of the United States; and that it is the purpose of this Act to include all such areas in the System and to clarify the authorities applicable to the system. Congress further reaffirms, declares, and directs that the promotion and regulation of the various areas of the National Park System, as defined in section 1c of this title, shall be consis-

tent with and founded in the purpose established by section 1 of this title [the Organic Act provision quoted above], to the common benefit of all the people of the United States. The authorization of activities shall be construed and the protection, management, and administration of these areas shall be conducted in light of the high public value and integrity of the National Park System and shall not be exercised in derogation of the values and purposes for which these various areas have been established, except as may have been or shall be directly and specifically provided by Congress. (16 USC 1a-1)

This section 1.4 of Management Policies represents the agency's interpretation of these key statutory provisions.

1.4.2 "Impairment" and "Derogation": One Standard

Congress intended the language of the Redwood amendment to the General Authorities Act to reiterate the provisions of the Organic Act, not create a substantively different management standard. The House committee report described the Redwood amendment as a "declaration by Congress" that the promotion and regulation of the national park system is to be consistent with the Organic Act. The Senate committee report stated that under the Redwood amendment, "The Secretary has an absolute duty, which is not to be compromised, to fulfill the mandate of the 1916 Act to take whatever actions and seek whatever relief as will safeguard the units of the national park system." So, although the Organic Act and the General Authorities Act, as amended by the Redwood amendment, use different wording ("unimpaired" and "derogation") to describe what the National Park Service must avoid, they define a single standard for the management of the national park system—not two different standards. For simplicity, Management Policies uses "impairment," not both statutory phrases, to refer to that single standard.

1.4.3 The NPS Obligation to Conserve and Provide for Enjoyment of Park Resources and Values

The "fundamental purpose" of the national park system, established by the Organic Act and reaffirmed by the General Authorities Act, as amended, begins with a mandate to conserve park resources and values. This mandate is independent of the separate prohibition on impairment, and so applies all the time, with respect to all park resources and values, even when there is no risk that any park resources or values may be impaired. NPS managers must always seek ways to avoid, or to minimize to the greatest degree practicable, adverse impacts on park resources and values. However, the laws do give the Service the management discretion to allow impacts to park resources and values when necessary and appropriate to fulfill the purposes of a park, so long as the impact does not constitute impairment of the affected resources and values.

The fundamental purpose of all parks also includes providing for the enjoyment of park resources and values by the people of the United States. The "enjoyment" that is contemplated by the statute is broad; it is the enjoyment of all the people of the United States, not just those who visit parks, and so includes enjoyment both by people who directly experience parks and by those who appreciate them from afar. It also includes deriving benefit (including scientific knowledge) and inspiration from parks, as well as other forms of enjoyment. Congress, recognizing that the enjoyment by future generations of the national parks can be ensured only if the superb

quality of park resources and values is left unimpaired, has provided that when there is a conflict between conserving resources and values and providing for enjoyment of them, conservation is to be predominant. This is how courts have consistently interpreted the Organic Act, in decisions that variously describe it as making "resource protection the primary goal" or "resource protection the overarching concern," or as establishing a "primary mission of resource conservation," a "conservation mandate," "an overriding preservation mandate," "an overarching goal of resource protection," or "but a single purpose, namely, conservation."

1.4.4 The Prohibition on Impairment of Park Resources and Values

While Congress has given the Service the management discretion to allow certain impacts within parks, that discretion is limited by the statutory requirement (enforceable by the federal courts) that the Park Service must leave park resources and values unimpaired, unless a particular law directly and specifically provides otherwise. This, the cornerstone of the Organic Act, establishes the primary responsibility of the National Park Service. It ensures that park resources and values will continue to exist in a condition that will allow the American people to have present and future opportunities for enjoyment of them.

The impairment of park resources and values may not be allowed by the Service unless directly and specifically provided for by legislation or by the proclamation establishing the park. The relevant legislation or proclamation must provide explicitly (not by implication or inference) for the activity, in terms that keep the Service from having the authority to manage the activity so as to avoid the impairment.

1.4.5 What Constitutes Impairment of Park Resources and Values

The impairment that is prohibited by the Organic Act and the General Authorities Act is an impact that, in the professional judgment of the responsible NPS manager, would harm the integrity of park resources or values, including the opportunities that otherwise would be present for the enjoyment of those resources or values. Whether an impact meets this definition depends on the particular resources and values that would be affected; the severity, duration, and timing of the impact; the direct and indirect effects of the impact; and the cumulative effects of the impact in question and other impacts.

An impact to any park resource or value may constitute an impairment. An impact would be more likely to constitute an impairment to the extent that it affects a resource or value whose conservation is:

- Necessary to fulfill specific purposes identified in the establishing legislation or proclamation of the park;
- Key to the natural or cultural integrity of the park or to opportunities for enjoyment of the park; or
- Identified as a goal in the park's general management plan or other relevant NPS planning documents.

An impact would be less likely to constitute an impairment to the extent that it is an unavoidable result, which cannot reasonably be further mitigated, of an action necessary to preserve or restore the integrity of park resources or values.

Impairment may occur from visitor activities; NPS activities in the course of managing a park; or activities undertaken by concessioners, contractors, and others operating in the park.

1.4.6 What Constitutes Park Resources and Values

The “park resources and values” that are subject to the no-impairment standard include:

- The park’s scenery, natural and historic objects, and wildlife, and the processes and conditions that sustain them, including, to the extent present in the park: the ecological, biological, and physical processes that created the park and continue to act upon it; scenic features; natural visibility, both in daytime and at night; natural landscapes; natural soundscapes and smells; water and air resources; soils; geological resources; paleontological resources; archeological resources; cultural landscapes; ethnographic resources; historic and prehistoric sites, structures, and objects; museum collections; and native plants and animals;
- Opportunities to experience enjoyment of the above resources, to the extent that can be done without impairing any of them;
- The park’s role in contributing to the national dignity, the high public value and integrity, and the superlative environmental quality of the national park system, and the benefit and inspiration provided to the American people by the national park system; and
- Any additional attributes encompassed by the specific values and purposes for which it was established.

1.4.7 Decision-making Requirements to Avoid Impairments

Before approving a proposed action that could lead to an impairment of park resources and values, an NPS decision-maker must consider the impacts of the proposed action and determine, in writing, that the activity will not lead to an impairment of park resources and values. If there would be an impairment, the action may not be approved.

In making a determination of whether there would be an impairment, a National Park Service decision-maker must use his or her professional judgment. The decision-maker must consider any environmental assessments or environmental impact statements required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA); relevant scientific studies, and other sources of information; and public comments.

When an NPS decision-maker becomes aware that an ongoing activity might have led or might be leading to an impairment of park resources or values, he or she must investigate and determine if there is, or will be, an impairment. Whenever practicable, such an investigation and determination will be made as part of an appropriate park planning process undertaken for other purposes. If it is determined that there is, or will be, such an impairment, the Director must take appropriate action, to the extent possible within the Service’s authorities and available resources, to eliminate the impairment. The action must eliminate the impairment as soon as reasonably possible, taking into consideration the nature, duration, magnitude, and other characteristics of the impacts to park resources and values, as well as the requirements of NEPA, the Administrative Procedure Act, and other applicable law.

(See *Levels of Park Planning 2.3; Evaluating Environmental Impacts 4.1.3; Planning 5.2; General 8.1; Visitor Use 8.2; General 9.1. Also see Director’s Order #12: Conservation Planning and Environmental Impact Analysis*)

1.5 External Threats and Opportunities

Strategies and actions beyond park boundaries have become increasingly necessary as the National Park Service strives to fulfill its mandate to preserve the natural and cultural resources of parks unimpaired for future generations. Ecological processes cross park boundaries, and park boundaries may not incorporate all of the natural resources, cultural sites, and scenic vistas that relate to park resources or the quality of the visitor experience. Therefore, activities proposed for adjacent lands may significantly affect park programs, resources, and values. Conversely, Park Service activities may have impacts outside park boundaries. Recognizing that parks are integral parts of larger regional environments, the Service will work cooperatively with others to anticipate, avoid, and resolve potential conflicts; protect park resources and values; provide for visitor enjoyment; and address mutual interests in the quality of life of community residents, including matters such as compatible economic development and resource and environmental protection. Such local and regional cooperation may involve other federal agencies; tribal, state, and local governments; neighboring landowners; non-governmental organizations; and all other concerned parties.

The Service will use all available authorities to protect park resources and values from potentially harmful activities. Superintendents will monitor land use proposals and changes to adjacent lands, and their potential impacts on park resources and values. It is appropriate for superintendents to engage constructively with the broader community in the same way that any good neighbor would. Superintendents will encourage compatible adjacent land uses, and seek to mitigate potential adverse effects on park resources and values by actively participating in the planning and regulatory processes of other federal agencies, and tribal, state, and local governments, having jurisdiction over property affecting, or affected by, the park. When engaged in these activities, superintendents should promote better understanding and communication by documenting the park’s concerns and sharing them with all who are interested, and by listening to the concerns of those who are affected by the park’s actions.

(See *Cooperative Planning 2.3.1.9; Addressing Threats from External Sources 3.4; Air Quality 4.7.1; Soundscape Management 4.9*)

1.6 Environmental Leadership

Given the scope of its responsibility for the resources and values entrusted to its care, the Service has an obligation, as well as a unique opportunity, to demonstrate leadership in environmental stewardship. The NPS must lead by example not only for visitors, other governmental agencies, the private sector, and the public at large, but also for a world-wide audience. Touching so many lives, the Service’s management of the parks must awaken the potential of each individual to play a proactive role in protecting the environment.

Environmental leadership will be demonstrated in all aspects of NPS activities, including policy development; park planning; all aspects of park operations; land protection; natural and cultural resource management; wilderness management; interpretation and education; facilities design, construction, and management; and commercial visitor services. In demonstrating environmental leadership, the Service will fully comply with the letter and the spirit of NEPA, and continually assess the impact its operations have on natural and cultural resources so that it may identify areas for improvement. The Service will institutionalize an assessment process, through a Service-wide environmental auditing program, that will evaluate a broad array of NPS activities for meeting the highest standards of environmental protection and compliance. The program will also screen for opportunities to implement sustainable practices, and tangibly demonstrate the highest levels of environmental ethic.

(See *Facility Planning and Design 9.1.1*)

1.7 Managing Information

The future of the Service as an accountable organization, and the future of individual parks, depends heavily on (1) the availability, management, and dissemination of comprehensive information, and (2) the Service's success in long-term preservation and management of, and access to that information. NPS information resources exist in a variety of different media, including paper records, electronic documents, maps, databases, photography, video, and audio. The NPS will implement professional-quality programs to preserve, manage, and integrate these resources, and to make them accessible. The Service will also use tools and technologies that will enhance:

- Information capture in permanent and durable forms.
- Information management that is required by NPS policy and by legal and professional standards.
- Management of electronic, textual, and audiovisual information resources, including still images, for continuous accessibility by NPS staff and the public.
- Internet and World Wide Web capabilities.
- Geographic information systems (GIS).
- The understanding and management of the nation's natural and cultural resources.

1.7.1 Information Sharing

The Service is committed to the widest possible sharing and availability of knowledge, and to fostering discussion about the national park system, America's natural and cultural heritage found in national parks, and the national experiences and values they represent. Most information shared with the public is presumed to be in the "public domain," and therefore available to anyone who is interested. The only exceptions to information sharing are where disclosure could jeopardize specific park resources or donor agreements, or violate legal or confidentiality requirements.

1.7.2 Proprietary Information

When producing or acquiring new works (such as images, graphic designs, logos, writing, or Web sites) through acquisition by donation, contracting, partnerships, or other means, the NPS will acquire the appropriate copyrights and any necessary releases, such as model or interview releases, whenever there is a current or anticipated need for unrestricted access to those works. The Service will respect the rights of owners of

copyrights to control how their works are used, and will comply with "fair use" standards when information or works are not licensed for dissemination.

(Also see *Director's Order #67: Copyrights and Trademarks*)

1.7.3 Information Confidentiality

While it is the general policy of the NPS to share information widely, the Service also realizes that providing information about the location of park resources may sometimes place those resources at risk of harm, theft, or destruction. This can occur, for example, with regard to caves, archeological sites, and rare plant and animal species. Some types of personnel and law enforcement matters are other examples of information that may be inappropriate for release to the public. Therefore, information will be withheld when the Service foresees that disclosure would be harmful to an interest protected by an exemption under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Information will also be withheld when the NPS has entered into a written agreement (e.g., deed of gift, interview release, or similar written contract) to withhold data for a fixed period of time at the time of acquisition of the information. Such information will not be provided unless required by FOIA or other applicable law, a subpoena, a court order, or a federal audit.

NPS managers will use these exemptions sparingly, and only to the extent allowed by law. In general, if information is withheld from one requesting party, it must be withheld from anyone else who requests it, and if information is provided to one requesting party, it must be provided to anyone else who requests it. Procedures contained in Director's Order #66: FOIA and Protected Resource Information, will be followed to document any decisions to release information or to withhold information from the public.

(See *Natural Resources Information 4.1.3; Studies and Collections 4.2; Caves 4.8.2.2; Research 5.1; Confidentiality 5.2.3; Interpretation and Education Services Beyond Park Boundaries 7.5.2*. Also see *Director's Orders #5: Paper and Electronic Communications, #19: Records Management, #84: NPS Library Programs, and #70: Internet and Intranet Publishing*. Also see *Reference Manual 53, Chapter 5*)

1.8 Accountability

1.8.1 Management Accountability

Management accountability is the expectation that managers are responsible for the quality and timeliness of program performance, increasing productivity, controlling costs, and mitigating the adverse aspects of agency operations, and for assuring that programs are managed with integrity and in compliance with applicable law.

The National Park Service will comply with OMB Circular A-123 and the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act of 1982 (31 USC 3512(d)), which require that all federal agencies and individual managers take systematic and proactive measures to (1) develop and implement appropriate, cost-effective management controls for results-oriented management; (2) assess the adequacy of management controls in federal programs and operations; (3) identify needed improvements; (4) take corresponding corrective action; and (5) report annually on management controls.

The concept of management accountability will be applied to all strategies, plans, guidance, and procedures that govern programs and operations throughout the Service, including those at the park level, the program center level, and the Service-wide level. The Service will, through its organization, policies, and procedures, implement systems of controls to reasonably ensure that:

- Programs achieve their intended results;
- Resources are used consistent with the NPS mission;
- Programs and resources are protected from fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement;
- Laws and regulations are followed; and
- Reliable and timely information is obtained, maintained, reported, and used for decision-making.

1.8.2 Government Performance and Results Act

As the business system for the National Park Service, performance management will be used to set goals and track accomplishments. Service-wide strategic plans, annual performance plans, and annual performance reports will be prepared, distributed, used, and analyzed for management accountability. These requirements are based on the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA). In accordance with GPRA:

- Strategic plans will be developed and updated at all organizational levels Service-wide. These plans will drive budgeting and resource allocation decisions, and represent the Service's performance agreement with the American people.
- The superintendent of each park will prepare and make available to the public a 5-year strategic plan, an annual performance plan, and an annual performance report. The strategic plan and annual performance plan will reflect NPS policies and goals stated in the Service-wide Strategic Plan. The park annual performance report will show accomplishments or results toward stated goals to evaluate organizational and individual performance. NPS GPRA goals must be consistent with these Management Policies.
- Park superintendents and other Park Service managers will implement a performance management system that focuses on achieving, through daily operations, the desired conditions or results identified in the plans.

(See Park Annual Performance Planning and Annual Performance Reporting 2.3.4)

1.9 Partnerships

The Service has had many successful relationships with individuals; organizations; tribal, state, and local governments; and other federal agencies that have helped fulfill the NPS mission. Through these relationships, the Service has received valuable assistance in the form of educational programs, living history demonstrations, search and rescue operations, fundraising campaigns, habitat restoration, ecosystem management, and a host of other activities. These relationships—generally referred to as “partnerships”—have produced countless benefits for the Service and for the national park system.¹ Benefits often extend into the future, because many people who participate as partners connect more strongly with the parks and commit themselves to long-term stewardship. The Service will continue to welcome and actively seek partnership activities with individuals, organizations, and others who share the Service's commitment to protecting park resources and values. The Service will embrace any partnership opportu-

nity that will help accomplish the NPS mission, provided that personnel and funding requirements do not make it impractical for the Service to participate, and provided that the partnership activity would not (1) violate legal or ethical standards; (2) otherwise reflect adversely on the NPS mission and image; or (3) imply an unwillingness by the Service to perform an inherently governmental function.

In the spirit of partnership, the Service will also seek opportunities for cooperative management agreements with state or local agencies that will allow for more effective and efficient management of the parks, as authorized by section 802 of the National Parks Omnibus Management Act of 1998 (16 USC 1a-2(l)).

Park superintendents may encounter partnership proposals from groups or organizations who wish to offer advice on park management issues. While the NPS encourages consultation and other forms of public involvement, the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) allows NPS staff to meet or consult with individuals and groups only for the purpose of exchanging views and information, and to solicit individual advice on proposed NPS actions. If consensus advice is sought, an advisory committee must first be chartered pursuant to FACA.

(See Public Involvement 2.3.1.6; Partnerships 4.1.4; Studies and Collections 4.2; Independent Research 5.1.2; Agreements 5.2.2; Interpretive and Educational Partnerships 7.6; Volunteers in Parks 7.6.1; Cooperating Associations 7.6.2; Enforcement Authority 8.3.4; Commercial Visitor Services Chapter 10; also see Director's Orders #7: Volunteers in Parks; #20: Agreements, #21: Donations and Fundraising; #27: Challenge Cost-Share Program; #32: Cooperating Associations; NPS Guide to the Federal Advisory Committee Act)

1.10 An Enduring Message

The need for management policies in the National Park Service was first articulated by Secretary of the Interior Franklin K. Lane in a letter to the first Director of the National Park Service, Stephen T. Mather, on May 13, 1918. Secretary Lane stated that administrative policy should adhere to three broad principles based on the 1916 Organic Act:

First, that the national parks must be maintained in absolutely unimpaired form for the use of future generations as well as those of our own time; second, that they are set apart for the use, observation, health, and pleasure of the people; and third, that the national interest must dictate all decisions affecting public or private enterprise in the parks.

Today's national parks have become important to our nation in more ways than Secretary Lane could possibly have imagined. However, his guiding principles remain fundamentally valid, and serve as a useful reminder of the need for a sustained commitment to park resource protection. The Service's commitment to protecting the national parks is embodied in this 2001 edition of Management Policies.

¹ This Part 1 of Management Policies focuses only on management of the national park system. Other guidance documents will address the many NPS partnership activities that extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.